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Lent—Easter Issue

March 15, 2024

From Pastor's Desk



We began Lent as we always do with the story of Jesus' temptation in the wilderness after spending forty days in prayer and fasting following his baptism. In Church Year B, the Year of Mark, we read Mark's two line account of the experience. In their gospels, Matthew and Luke go into great detail, listing the temptations, so we have them in mind when Mark briefly says, "He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan . . . and the angels waited on him." But Mark, writing around 70 C. E., is eloquent on the subject compared to John, who doesn't even mention the event. The focus of the author of the gospel of John, written about 90—110 C. E., is on Jesus' Godly identity, including Jesus' own description of himself as "I Am." He begins by describing Jesus as the Word of God made flesh. He's more interested in Jesus as God who has returned to his people as one of them, bringing his Kingdom to the world and connecting heaven to earth. John emphasizes that God chose to become fully human in order to save his people from their sins, and his coronation as their King took place on the cross.

Unlike the synoptic gospel writers, John places the story of Jesus, a faithful Jew, going up to Jerusalem for the Passover and cleansing the temple early in his ministry. When Jesus sees the raucous commerce taking place in God's House, he is filled with righteous anger. Like 21st century CEOs who are paid almost 350% more than the average worker, the chief priests and rulers were taking their cut of the money changers' and vendors' profits. They also got the best parts of the sacrificed animals for their own families' tables. Jesus formed a whip out of some cords and began driving out the money changers and sellers of the finest sacrificial animals, overturning tables and scattering coins, goats and sheep (he let the sellers of doves, which were bought by the poor, walk out), and declared himself to be the true Temple. Talk about making an entrance! Even though he doesn't write about Jesus' time in the wilderness and the temptations he faced in his gospel, John would have known that the devil had taunted Jesus to show up at the temple and throw himself off its highest point. That would have been the roof over the Holy of Holies in the inner court, where only the High Priest could enter, and only once a year on the Day of Atonement. The adversary quotes Psalm 91:12, "He (God) will command his angels and 'On their hands they will bear you up . . .,'" essentially telling Jesus, "If you're really the Son of God, you have great power. A show of power impresses these humans. Surely God expects you to use your initiative. I know the ways of the world. Listen to me and you'll be recognized as the Promised One and crowned King. Isn't that the point?" But Jesus' chose the "foolishness" of God rather than the "wisdom" of the "world, the flesh and the devil," and did things God's way, making some powerful enemies. Watching him, his disciples and others remembered Psalm 69:9, "Zeal for your house will consume me." Could the itinerant rabbi really be the Chosen One for whom they had waited so long? But even they did not realize what Jesus meant when he said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" until he had been raised from the dead.

Isaiah 55:8-9 tells us, "8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD. 9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts." God wants what is best for us. Doing things God's way and following the path of love, justice and mercy is always the best if not the easiest way to face life. After he had been resurrected, Jesus asked Peter three times, "Do you love me?" When he was sure that Peter understood what it meant to love God and the true cost of discipleship, he admonished him, "Feed my sheep. . . Follow me" (John 21:15-17c, 19b).

Pastor Larry

Inside this issue:

Members and Friends' Birthdays	2
Easter Breakfast	2
Donate for Easter Plants	2
Mid-week Bible Study	2
Kids' Corner	3
Living Our Baptism During Lent	3
Evie's Lemon Bars Deluxe	4
Earth Day	4
We Are Easter People	4
Giving to Markham Lutheran Church	5
Saving Faith	5



March, April and May Birthdays of Members and Friends



March: 3/1, Douglas Maynard; 3/4, Angela Davis, Jeanne Morgan, Sarah Phillips; 3/6, Jessica Findlay, Meredith Postlewaite; 3/7, Karli Duran; 3/8, Jamie Rozema; 3/9, Janet Lyons; 3/10, Donna Meegan; 3/11, Ida Dickerson; 3/16, Isabella Earl; 3/18, Megan Blankenship Kazy-Garey; 3/19, Rosemary Schneekloth; 3/21, Mark Gage, Chuck Monahan; 3/22, Abbey Rozema; 3/24, Joseph Mills; 3/27, Christopher Tauber; 3/28, Debra Ivey; 3/29, Malcolm Mills; 4/5, Regina DeCarlo; 4/6, Les King, William Wiltjer; 4/7, Sheila Jackson; 4/10, Jan King; 4/14, William Morgan; 4/15, Robert Molnar; 4/16, Rodney Phillips; 4/23, Mitchell King; 4/24, Vernon Neeley; 4/25, Kris Findlay, Zachary Vaught; 4/26, Alyssa Mankewicz; 4/27, Corey Gonzales, Paulie Neeley; 4/29, Joshua Kustra; 5/2, Luke Phillips; 5/5, Lilliane Jenkins, Amanda Wiltjer; 5/7, Diana Knaack-Fauts; 5/12, Alyssa Ivey; 5/13, Samantha Martin; 5/19, Katie O'Hern; 5/20, Elizabeth Wiltjer; 5/24, Richard O'Hern II, Emmalynn Nowicki; 5/28, Glen Gage, Jr., Lauren Findlay; 5/29, Jason Horlacher; 5/30, Ronda McIntire, Renee Moran, Sandra Martin; 5/31, Vernelle Cloney

Altar Guild's Easter Breakfast



The MLC Altar Guild is already preparing for Holy Week and Easter, a very busy time for them. In the weeks before Advent through the Feast of the Holy Trinity, it's "all go" for the members of the Altar Guild!

We're excited to announce that at 9 a.m. on Easter Sunday the Altar Guild will be hosting a simple but special breakfast and you're invited. If you would like to bring something, please contact [Rosemary](#) or [Bernie](#).

Donating for Easter Plants



Easter blooms are \$10 per plant. The donation deadline is Palm Sunday, March 24th. Envelopes are available on the large table under the windows in the Narthex. Please give your envelope to Rosemary before or after church.

If you mail your donation, please specify for whom they are in memory and their name(s) will appear in the Easter service bulletin. If you use the [PayPal button](#) on the church website, please send an [email](#) to MLC letting us know that your donation is for an Easter plant or plants and who you would like named in the bulletin.

Thank you.

Starting Wednesday, June 5, 2024, at 7 p.m., we will resume mid-week Bible study on Zoom. The weekly sessions will explore a variety of topics from our [Lutheran perspective](#). The link to join and the service bulletin will be e-mailed each Wednesday. If you aren't on our contact list, please send an e-mail to markhamlutheranchurch@gmail.com.



Kids' Corner

Even after Adam and Eve disobeyed God, bringing sin and death into the world, God kept loving them. The Triune God promised to send a Savior: "For God loved the world in this way, that he sent his only son . . . God sent not his son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved." (John 3:16-17)

If you ever wonder about God's love for you, remember the words found in the gospel of John. Read with your family the different gospel accounts of Jesus' death on the cross and his resurrection from the grave. How much does God love you? So much that God gave God's life for you so you can be with God forever!

Prayer: Jesus, thank you for loving me so much that you came into the world to save me. When I start to think that I can be happy without you and do whatever I want, remind me how much I need your love and forgiveness. Help me to remember that life with you brings true happiness. In your strong, loving name. Amen.

Adapted from *God's Promises for Me*, Concordia Publishing House



Living Our Baptism During Lent

Live among God's faithful people: Lent always begins with the reading of Jesus being tempted in the desert. He is able to resist and choose God's way. Sometimes we are not as strong, choosing paths which are not healthy or of God. It is not easy. But God gives the gift of community to teach us, accompany us, and encourage us. In the beginning of Paul's letter to the Philippians, Apostle Paul reflects his love for Christian community.

Hear the word of God and share in the Lord's supper: For centuries, Christians have been encouraged to give up something during the season of Lent, and in doing so, increase an appreciation of the sacrifice of Jesus. Apostle Paul recognizes his own personal sacrifices to follow Jesus, but he confesses how much he has gained. The sacrifices pale in comparison to the gain in Christ. More than anything, Paul wants to know Christ and the power of his resurrection. Hear the word of God.

Proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed: Lent invites us to go inward and become more contemplative. This is an important part of the Lenten journey, but Jesus did not die to keep it a secret. His death and resurrection are meant to be the good news proclaimed from the housetops. Apostle Paul found courage to boldly proclaim Christ—despite imprisonment and threats of death. He even discovered how God used the negative experiences of his life to proclaim Christ.

Serve all people, following the example of Jesus: We associate acts of loving kindness and mercy with the season of Lent. Through art, music, preaching, teaching, and other means, the church tells the story of the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. But the example of Jesus is more than his death. Throughout his life, Jesus served. He was a servant leader, one who was willing to get down on his knees and wash the feet of the disciples.

Strive for justice and peace in all the earth: Holy Week tells the story of Jesus—a story filled with injustice and violence. Though innocent, Jesus was sentenced to a violent death. Where is the justice and peace? On our behalf, Jesus encountered injustice, violence, and death itself in order to bring a new order—one in which the lion and lamb might lie down together. Until that time comes, we continue to strive for justice and peace in all the earth. We press on.

Living our Baptism...Five Gifts of Discipleship during Lent written by John and Robin McCullough-Bade; reproduced with permission. Copyright © 2016 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Many thanks to trustee Matthew Phillips and congregation president Michael McIntire for repairing a leaking pipe in the church kitchen ceiling. It was a huge job. A big thank you to Frank Zenek for his work on the furnace. The church has stayed nice and warm.

Evie's Lemon Bars Deluxe

2 1/4 cups flour
 1/2 cup powdered sugar
 1 cup butter
 4 eggs, beaten
 2 cups sugar
 1/3 cup lemon juice
 1/2 teaspoon baking powder

Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees.

Sift together 2 cups of the flour and powdered sugar. Cut in butter until mixture clings together. Press in 9" x 13" baking pan. Bake 20-25 minutes.

Beat together eggs, sugar and lemon juice. Sift together remaining flour and baking powder. Stir into egg mixture. Pour over baked crust. Bake for 25 minutes. Sprinkle with additional powdered sugar.

Makes 30 bars

**Top Causes of Climate Change**

- 1) Burning fossil fuels (coal, oil, and gas): It produces greenhouse gases carbon dioxide and nitrous oxide.
- 2) Manufacturing goods
- 3) Cutting down forests
- 4) Transportation
- 5) Powering buildings
- 6) Agribusiness (producing food)
- 7) Over consumption

We Are Easter People

This was the theme of worship in the early Church. Persons initiated into the Church through Holy Baptism gathered every Sunday to celebrate the resurrection of Christ in their worship.

At the weekly assembly the Bible was read and explained (The Liturgy of the Word), after which they brought offerings to the table, including bread and wine, which were blessed and shared in the common meal (The Liturgy of the Eucharist).

The Eucharist was a meal of joy and thanks because:

- * the risen Christ, proclaimed in the sermon, was present in the sacramental meal;
- * the saving event of Christ was dramatized in the meal - bread given, broken, and

shared;

- * the Communion was a "foretaste of the feast to come" when we eat with our Lord

in the heavenly banquet for eternity;

- * Christians were tied together in love as they shared the bread and wine.

Luke 24:13-35 (The gospel for the 3rd Sunday of Easter) was a resurrection story loved by the early Christians because it portrayed their weekly Lord's Day worship experience:

- * As the Lord explained the Bible to the disciples on the road to Emmaus, so the

Church celebrated the Liturgy of the Word.

- * As the risen Lord revealed himself in the breaking of bread, so the Church celebrated the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

Christians today can discover what was deeply known by the first followers of Christ: That the Church is an Easter People who gather on the Lord's Day to:

- * celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ;
- * meet the risen Lord as he comes in the preaching and the supper;
- * go forth from the meeting to live as Christ's body in the world.

The Church today, like the early Church, wants to meet the Lord. The meeting takes place as the Church gathers to hear the word of grace and to share the holy meal. The love-encounter, through word and sacrament, never grows old. Each encounter increases anticipation for the next.

In Revelation 3:20 the risen Christ says to the Church: "I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come into their house and eat with them, and they will eat with me." The call of Christ goes out to his people:

- * "Hear my voice." (The Liturgy of the Word)
- * "Eat with me." (The Liturgy of the Holy Communion/The Eucharist)

The Church today, like the early Church, wants to meet the Lord.



"Like" us on Facebook & follow us on Twitter @MarkhamLutheran



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Calendar

Adult Forum/Sunday School:

9 a.m., in person from September—May
(will not meet on Easter Sunday)

Divine Service:

Sunday, 10:15 a.m., September—May; 9 a.m. from Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day weekend; In person and on Facebook Live

Mid-week Lenten Vespers:

February 21, 28; March 6, 13, 20, 7 p.m., on Facebook Live

Holy Week and Easter (all services in person and on Facebook Live):

Maundy Thursday, March 28:
7 p.m.

Good Friday, March 29:

Tenebrae, 7 p.m.

Easter, March 31

Breakfast: 9 a.m.

Easter Festival Service: 10:15 a.m.

Pentecost: Sunday, May 19, 10:15 a.m.

(Wear red!)

The Holy Trinity: Sunday, May 26,
9 a.m. (Sacrament of Baptism)

Dates to Remember:

Sunday, March 24, Congregation Meeting

Thursday, May 9, Ascension

Sunday, May 12, Mother's Day.

Sunday, May 26, worship in Word and Sacrament moves to 9 a.m.

Giving to Markham Lutheran Church

The Lent and Easter Seasons are great times to give to your church home. We've made it easy for you. You can 1) go to our [website](#) and press the "Donate" button, which will take you to PayPal (you don't need a PayPal account to use the service), 2) send a check to Markham Lutheran Church, 3518 W. 160th St., Markham, Illinois 60428, or 3) place your offering envelope in the little church shaped bank on the small table in the narthex. (If you need envelopes, [e-mail the church office](#) and the secretary will let financial secretary Jan Nicholas know.)

Thank you for your generosity with your time, talent and treasure. If you've never tithed before, prayerfully consider designating an affordable percentage of your income for the church. Every dollar counts! Offerings coming in regularly that we can depend on make a big difference.

Saving Faith



Saving faith is believing that Jesus is mine—I am God's child and Jesus has given himself for and to me and joined his life to mine. This is what Martin Luther called the "happy exchange:" Christ, out of love, traded his righteousness and purity to sinners and received from them their guilt and shame.

When baptized Lutherans partake of Holy Communion, we believe that Jesus is truly present for us under the bread and wine. The words "given for you" convey a promise that we can trust. Lutherans understand Christ's presence in the Holy Meal as a presence *for us*. Fed and forgiven, we are sent out into the world as Christ's presence *for others*! We think about how our decisions and actions impact them.

A prayer for Mother's Day

Lord, we remember the mothers who have gone before us.

For their love, sacrifice, struggle and joy, we thank you.

Lord, we remember the mothers of Scripture who are a part of our story as we are a part of your story.

For their courage, faith, love and fierceness, we thank you.

Lord, we remember those who have not given birth to us, but are mothers to us.

For their gift of themselves that they have given, we thank you.

For the women who struggle with fertility, for those women whom society labels as less in their childlessness, for those women who have lost children.

For their tears, for their strength, for their wisdom, for their lives, we thank you.

In your name we pray. Amen.

by Claire Schoepp

